

Child Support Advisory Board
MINUTES
December 18, 2003

Present

1st District, George Gliaudys, Jr., Esq.
2nd District, Paula Leftwich
3rd District, Lucy T. Eisenberg, Esq.
3rd District, Betty Nordwind, Esq.
4th District, Jean F. Cohen
4th District, Maria Tortorelli
5th District, Susan Speir
5th District, Reginald Brass

Chief Information Office,
Earl Bradley
Children and Family Services,
Patti Griffin
Department of Public Social Services,
Rosie Ruiz
Child Support Services Department,
Steven Golightly
CA Department of Child Support Services,
Nancy Stone

Guests

Lori Cruz, CSSD
Julie Paik, CSSD
Gail Juiliano, CSSD
Carol Mentell, CSSD

Absent

1st District, Jane Preece, Esq.
2nd District, John Murrell

Franchise Tax Board, Debbie Strong
Superior Court, David Jetton

Barbara Abrams, DCFS
Dennyse Williams, DCFS
Silvia Valencia, DPSS
Anita Spenser, DPSS
Lawrence Hill, SEIU Local 660

Staff Support

Lee Millen, Board of Supervisors
Peter Papadakis, Board of Supervisors

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Eisenberg called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. A self introduction followed.

APPROVE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 20, 2003

On motion of Member Tortorelli, seconded by Member Cohen and unanimously carried, the minutes of November 20, 2003 were approved with the following corrections:

Page 3, third paragraph, second sentence, "In response to Vice Chair Speir's concern that the CSAB had not been given a copy of the draft plan and had not been advised regarding the CSSD's decision to implement the BPR program,..."

Attendance, Guests, add Leora Gershenzon, DCSS, and delete Steven Golightly, and Page 2, fifth paragraph, last sentence, "Ms. Gershenzon ...on the importance of the state program is critical ..."

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Steven Golightly, Chief Deputy Director, CSSD, reported the following on behalf of Director Browning who is on jury duty:

- Current Collections for November 2003 are 36.75% with a cumulative collections for FY 2003-04 at 40.06%, and Arrears collections are at 28.87% through November;
- National attention was focused recently on an interstate collection of \$289 thousand in arrears that occurred when a NCP was identified via a passport application and paid the total amount from an investment account;
- A CSSD employee was prosecuted for forgery and fraud totaling about \$200 thousand; the bank that cashed the check is considered liable as well. Consequently, sweeps with ARS in conjunction with the Auditor Controller's Office on recurrent addresses are conducted on monies on hold or distributed, and staff is alerted as to newspaper accounts of misappropriation of funds; also, staff is working with the Auditor Controller's Office to suppress DPSS addresses to avoid delivery of child support checks for CP's to DPSS offices;
- A CSSD employee was terminated from County service and prosecution is ongoing, due to his collection of about \$30 thousand from Spanish speaking clients and his promise to resolve their arrears;
- At the 17th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program the CSSD received recognition for: Minimizing Caller Wait-Time by Use of a Forecaster; CSSD Optimization of ARS Computer System; Operation Current Support Improvement; and Child Support Services Department Employer Workshop;
- About 350 attended a recently held Employer Workshop in Palos Verdes, and the next employee Town Hall meeting is scheduled on January 7, 2003 at the Arboretum that will include a cross section of all levels of CSSD staff;
- The DCSS has recommended that the Governor modify compromise of arrears program monies to Los Angeles County from \$1 million to \$500 thousand.

Nancy Stone, DCSS, reported that the compromise of arrears program is a process by which given the case meeting certain criteria, adjustments can be made on arrears owed. Also, since the project was delayed the allocation associated with this program during the first six (6) months was taken back. In response to Member Tortorelli, Ms. Lori Cruz reported that in the foster care compromise program there is a stipulation in the order to have data included in the child's court file.

DCSS REPORT

Nancy Stone, DCSS, reported that the Governor's office has restricted travel for State employees for only essential needs. Chairperson Eisenberg noted that staff can attempt to provide teleconferencing for Ms. Stone beginning next month.

DCSS and CSSD staff met recently regarding systemic issues such as collection and disbursement, calculation of arrears, interstate and a process dysfunction in the area of customer service. A letter will be forwarded to Member Browning detailing concerns and specific case observations, and requesting a plan and a timeline to address these issues; Chairperson Eisenberg will be forwarded a copy.

The Allocation Work Group has had three meetings and will meet again in January 2004, and then draft a report to be forwarded to the State Budget Committee recommending an allocation methodology.

Ms. Stone noted that the minutes of the previous meeting reflect that the CSAB requested that the CSSD meet with the DCSS and attempt to obtain approval of the BPR by the next CSAB meeting. Steven Golightly, Chief Deputy, CSSD, reported that Ms. Paik contacted Carol Hood, Chief Deputy Director, DCSS, regarding concerns. While CSSD is not required to seek formal approval from DCSS on the BPR, the CSSD is on Phase I corrective action process and the BPR is one of the required components.

Following discussion, the CSAB agreed that the CSSD should meet and confer with the DCSS regarding the BPR, and Chairperson Eisenberg requested that Member Browning report back next month with input from Ms. Hood if possible, whether there are concerns with BPR and if so, an explanation of each.

Member Nordwind reported that a presenter last month indicated that on two separate cases a complainant's state hearing was not rescheduled as requested and was notified later in writing that she was listed as a failure to appear, and a state hearing scheduled was continued without an explanation although the complainant was present. Ms. Stone reported that a Judge has investigated both cases and the results were e-mailed to Vice Chair Speir. Vice Chair Speir noted that the investigation was not thorough and included only a review of the file, and in one instance it probably included a review of the wrong file. Ms. Stone agreed to have the legal department conduct another level of investigation on this. Member Nordwind requested that Member Stone provide a written explanation regarding the state's record of complainant's failure to appear at the hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENT

A self-introduction occurred.

ELECTION OF BOARD CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Member Cohen nominated Chairperson Eisenberg, seconded by Member Leftwich to continue to serve as Chairperson. Chairperson Eisenberg was re-elected by acclamation.

Vice Chair Speir nominated Member Gliaudys, seconded by Member Nordwind for Vice Chair. Chairperson Eisenberg nominated Member Speir for Vice Chair.

The deputy secretary reported that Vice Chair Speir was re-elected by a majority of votes tallied.

NOVEMBER DPSS/CSSD INTERFACE MEETING

Steven Golightly reported that on November 19, 2003 the DPSS/CSSD Interface met for the third time and will continue to meet every three to four months. A summary of action items and timelines were distributed (copy on file). Chairperson Eisenberg requested a status report at the next CSAB meeting on enumerated action items. Member Nordwind requested that advocates receive invitations to these meetings.

CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE REPORT

Member Nordwind reported that the Customer Committee met recently and discussed the following: The Call Center is being studied concerning whether customers are given appropriate referrals and the role of the MCC Log data and its interpretation. Secondly, there are 13 complaint investigators assigned to the State Hearing Division, one more staff person is needed in Division IV and the interstate division needs to have more than two investigators permanently assigned due to the volume of complaints. Although six additional staff have been assigned temporarily to work on the backlog of interstate cases, the systemic problem will reoccur unless permanent staff are assigned. Further, the lack of automation, the lack of an interstate link to the ARS system, and the complexity of the issues that only interstate staff can handle are of concern.

In response to Chairperson Eisenberg, Ms. Stone agreed to have the DCSS policy office teleconference next month and answer questions regarding interstate concerns.

Member Nordwind reported that there are staff in the Call Center that are being trained to answer interstate questions, and a special communication system is set-up to handle e-mails from the Call Center to the interstate division in an attempt to improve interstate expertise. Also, the State Hearing Division has four hearing specialists in training, and the division has not handled hearings as yet. Further, Member Gliaudys is the co-chair of the Customer Service Committee.

STATUS REPORT OF BACKLOG OF UNSIGNED STIPULATIONS AND COURT POLICY REGARDING SIGNING

Lori Cruz reported that due to recent changes in court procedures relating to processing of stipulations, CSSD has implemented a Temporary Policy regarding Enforcement Stipulations (copy on file). Staff may release a license suspension and/or FTB levy as long as the NCP agrees to pay current support and makes the additional lump sum payment of any amount. However, Call Center staff will not make referrals to the divisions in situations in which it is apparent that relief cannot be provided at the divisional level. Instead, staff will instruct the NCP to seek relief in court and inform NCP of the availability of the services of the Family Law Facilitator; also, if the NCP disputes the amount of the withholding in the order, staff will instruct him/her to seek relief from the court.

In response to Member Tortorelli, Ms. Cruz agreed to attempt to develop a guideline for lump sum payments required of NCP's. Also, Member Tortorelli suggested that Judge Bobb could be asked to consider setting a hearing for the stipulation and notice the other party.

DISCUSSION ON INYO COUNTY PROGRAM FOR NIGHT COURT SESSIONS

George Gliaudys reported that Inyo County has an innovative program that provides the opportunity for working parents to attend evening court sessions. Mr. Gliaudys advised that it may be of benefit to Los Angeles County to implement a similar program.

Following discussion, on motion of Member Gliaudys, seconded by Vice Chair Speir and unanimously carried, the CSAB recommended that the CSSD explore the possibility of an evening court session available in Los Angeles County. Ms. Cruz reported on Inyo County's program and indicated that if the program were initiated in Los Angeles County the Sheriff's Department would be asked to provide security; however, this may be problematic in that they are facing a \$175 million budget cut. Further discussion ensued, and Ms. Stone agreed to report back with more models that exist in other counties.

REVIEW AND DISCUSS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Gail Juiliano, CSSD, explained the components of the November MCC/MCI Report and its tracking process (copy on file). Member Nordwind explained that the Customer Service Committee suggested and Ms. Guiliano agreed to attempt to look at a random sample over the next three months at the substance of some of the indicated "resolved cases" to determine if they have been appropriately/qualitatively resolved. In response to Member Nordwind, Mr. Golightly reported that the higher volume at El Segundo office is probably due to the higher level of absences by staff, and other issues such as morale and supervision. Also, due to an inordinate volume of correspondence of interstate cases from other states that contributes to a higher volume, a "triage" of interstate correspondence has been initiated in the interstate office.

The CSAB agreed that future MCC/MCI reports be forwarded to the Customer Service Committee for review.

REPORT ON A PROPOSED SYSTEM FOR LOGGING SYSTEMIC ISSUES/PROBLEMS THAT ARE IDENTIFIED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES, AND FOR MONITORING THE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE

Chairperson Eisenberg reported that she and Vice Chair Speir met with Mr. Golightly and he agreed to develop a possible pilot program to identify systemic problems and implement their resolution.

Mr. Golightly distributed a Problem Identification Form (copy on file) to be used by staff at all levels in identifying problems that will be faxed to him; all other forms and processes currently in use (except ARS) will be suspended during a three month period. A small group of senior managers will help chronicle the problems, make the

determinations relative to whether or not the problems are truly “systemic” or one-time mistakes, and then work with appropriate staff to resolve the problems. Mr. Golightly agreed to report back on the status of the pilot in January 2004.

In response to Member Nordwind, Mr. Golightly noted that state hearing decisions will be reviewed to identify systemic issues, and decisions requiring implementation will be acted on. Member Nordwind suggested that the new problem identification process include as a component the current CSSD state hearing systemic problem process and review. Ms. Stone suggested that the process be included as a component of the BPR. Member Gliaudys noted that the employee suggestion award program in the County offers an incentive for employees to offer suggestions to improve operations.

REPORT ON A NEW PROCESS FOR OBTAINING COURT ORDERS

Discussion ensued on the need to have a person in each Division that would be responsible to get a copy of the court order and a time-frame to obtain it, and a written procedure to address this issue.

This agenda item was deferred to the next CSAB meeting.

STATUS REPORT ON IDENTIFYING CHILDREN UNBORN AT TIME CP APPLIED FOR WELFARE (AND PRIOR TO 12/01)

Chairperson Eisenberg noted that a new procedure was implemented in November 2001 that would cure the problem of inactive cases of unborn children. Also, Vice Chair Speir had asked for the review of a list of applications received prior to the implementation of this new procedure.

Gail Juiliano reported that a list of 168 has been generated and the PRU has completed 108 cases, of which 54 were closed due to the demise of the unborn child. These were 1995 – 1998 cases that did not indicate any existing child on Leader or on Single Index and/or the CP is no longer on welfare and she has requested that the case be closed. There are 35 cases that were inactivated the unborn but the case was not closed because other dependents were on the case, and the status of the child was corrected and updated on 19 cases. There are 60 cases that are being worked on wherein the CP will be contacted and/or a letter will be mailed out. If a case is closed a letter is forwarded to the CP and the case can be reopened if the CP contests the action due to a dependent child. Vice Chair Speir expressed concern that the CP was not contacted prior to deciding to close each case, and Chairperson Eisenberg suggested that a survey sample could be reviewed to determine if the new procedure is effective.

Member Brass, 5th District, distributed holiday gifts to the CSAB.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:06 p.m.

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